

America's Auto Makers on the Road for the Long Term

In the op-ed "[Can America's Auto Makers Survive?](#)" (Aug. 7), Paul Ingrassia asks whether Detroit's auto makers can survive. In the case of General Motors, the answer is, emphatically, yes. And not only survive, but thrive.

There is no question the industry is facing significant pressures driven by a weak U.S. economy and rising fuel costs. At GM, we're taking the difficult and necessary steps to reduce our cost structure to be more competitive in the global marketplace and build a stronger foundation for our future.

Contrary to Mr. Ingrassia's notion that U.S. auto makers did not anticipate the risk of rising fuel prices, GM has been preparing for the shift for several years toward more fuel-efficient models and developing diverse alternative fuel solutions that will redefine the industry.

In fact, 11 of our last 13 U.S. launches have been cars or crossovers, as will 18 of the next 19. We have 17 models that get 30 mpg or better, and offer six hybrid models. Most significant is our commitment to produce the Chevy Volt, a plug-in electric vehicle that will deliver 40 miles of gasoline-free driving and a total range of about 400 miles using a small gasoline engine to recharge its electric battery. This truly revolutionary vehicle will be on the market in 2010.

It's also important to note that the auto industry has a significant impact on the U.S. economy -- by directly employing a quarter of a million people and providing health care and pension benefits to millions. The auto industry has invested a quarter of a trillion dollars in the U.S. over the last 20 years, spends \$12 billion a year in R&D and is the largest purchaser of raw materials and computer chips in the U.S. The future of the auto business is important to America, and we are dedicated to seeing that GM continues to be a significant part of the American landscape for decades to come.

Fritz Henderson

GM President and COO

Detroit